

Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENTI 02337 250501Z

43

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-13 /081 W

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R 250403Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7069

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL HONG

AMCONSUL UDORN

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 2337

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR PFOR LA TH

SUBJECT: LAO MEDIA CARRY DIFFERING ACCOUNTS OF WHETHER MUKDAHAN
BORDER POINT OPEN

REF A BANGKOK 26026, B VIENTIANE 2238

1.IHPDR MINISTRY OF INFORMATION DAILY BULLETIN IN LAO
SEPTEMBER 24 CARRIED ATTACK, REPEATED ON LAO RADIO,
THAT "THAI REACTIONARY GROUP" IN MUKDAHAN WAS BLOCKING
AGREEMENT WHICH PAPER ALLEGED HAD BEEN MADE BETWEEN TWO
GOVERNMENTS AT FOREIGN MINISTER LEVEL TO OPEN
SAVANNAKHET-MUKDAHAN BORDER POINT ON SEPTEMBER 15.
PAPER CHARGED THAT ON SEPTEMBER 23 IGH T THAI POLICE
FROM MUKDAHAN HAD GONE TO SAVANNAKMTT AND "ORDERED" THE
LAO SIDE TO HOLD A MEETING TO DISCUSS OPENING THE
BORDER CHECKPOINT. AT THE SAME TIME THE THAI WERE SAID
TO HAVE SENT TWO T-28'S OVER THE RIVER "TO MAKE
THREATS".

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PAGE 02 VIENTI 02337 250501Z

2. BULLETIN ADDED THAT, AFTER TWO GOVERNMENTS HAD REACHED AN AGREEMENT, LOCAL OFFICIALS SHOULD CARRY IT OUT ACCORDING TO ORDERS AND HAD NO RIGHT TO BLOCK IT. THEREFORE, THAI POLICE IN MUKDAHAN HAD NO RIGHT TO HOLD FURTHER DISCUSSIONS ABOUT THEIR GOVERNMENT'S ORDER TO OPEN BORDER CHECKPOINT SEPTEMBER 15. AS FOR THE LAO SIDE, IT HAD NEVER ANNOUNCED THE CLOSURE OF THE BORDER.

3. LAO PARTY NEWSPAPER "VOICE OF THE PEOPLE" SEPTEMBER 25, HOWECCR, REPORTED THAT FOREIGN MINISTRY HAD STATED SEPTEMBER 23 THAT THAININTERIOR MINISTRY HAD ANNOUNCED OPENING OF BORDER AT MUKDAHAN BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 16, ON CONDITION THAT PEOPLE OR GOODS HAD TO ENTER OR LEAVE THAILAND BETWEEN 0700 AND 1700 AND BE INSPECTED BY THAI IMMIGRATION OFFICIALS AT MUKDAHAN.

4. LAO OFFICIAL TOLD EMBOFF SEPTEMBER 20, HOWEVER, THAT HE HAD HEARD THAT, AFTER THAI PRIMIN SIGNED DECREE OPENING BORDER POINT SEPTEMBER 16, IT WOULD TAKE ABOUT ANOTHER FIFTEEN DAYS FOR LOCAL OFFICIALS TO COMPLETE PREPARATIONS FOR THEINPENING.

5. THAI EMBASSY OFFICER TOLD EMBOFF SEPTEMBER 24 THAT LPDR WAS STILL COMPILING NAMES OF THAI PRISONERS BUT HAD NOT YET SENT

LIST TO THAI EMBASSY WHICH WAS MAKING DAILY INQUIRIES ABOUT IT. THAI EXPECT THERE WILL BE ABOUT EIGHTY NAMES. THAI EMBASSY STILL HAS NO CONFIRMATION THAT MUKDAHAN BORDER OPEN.

6. K/EENT: THE LAO GOVERNMENT DAILY BULLETIN AND PARTY "VOICE OF THE PEOPLE" ACCOUNTS OF WHAT IS GOING ON AT MUKDAHAN DO NOT SEEM TO JIBE AND WE ARE STILL NOT SURE WHETHER BORDER HAS ACTUALLY BEEN OPENED OR NOT.
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